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SUBJECT: INSTRUCTIONS FOR CUBA EMBARGO RESOLUTION

¶1. The Department instructs USUN to vote against the resolution, "Necessity of Ending the Economic, Commercial, and Financial Embargo Imposed by the United States of America against Cuba," scheduled for consideration by the UN General Assembly on Wednesday, October 28, 2009. USUN should draw on the following points in making its intervention during the debate.

¶2. Begin points:

-- Madam Chair/Mr. Chairman,

-- In the course of this debate, we will hear about division and differences. We must, however, not lose sight of one important commonality - the United States, like most Member States, is firmly committed to supporting the desire of the Cuban people to determine freely their country's future.

-- The United States of America, like all Member States, has the sovereign right to conduct its economic relationship with another country as it sees fit. The U.S. economic relationship with Cuba is a bilateral issue and part of a broader set of relations. For example, in recent months, the United States has undertaken several steps to promote family visits and the free flow of information to and from the Cuban people. The United States lifted restrictions on family visits and remittances and expanded the amounts of humanitarian items that the American people can donate to individuals in Cuba. The United States has enhanced the ability of U.S. telecommunication companies to pursue agreements to provide service to Cuba and has made it easier for U.S. agricultural producers to pursue contracts with Cuban buyers.

-- We have done so while maintaining our firm commitment to encouraging the Cuban government to respect basic norms embodied in the Inter-American Democratic Charter and the

Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

-- Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are part of this organization's core values. We should not lose sight of that in a debate mired in rhetorical arguments of the past and focused on tactical differences. That is a debate that does nothing to help the Cuban people.

-- Madam Chair/Mr. Chairman,

-- I must address two significant distortions in the Cuban position. First, my delegation regrets that the delegation from Cuba continues to label inappropriately and incorrectly U.S. trade restrictions on Cuba as an act of genocide. Such an egregious misuse of the term diminishes the real suffering of victims of genocide elsewhere in the world. Secondly, it is erroneous to charge that U.S. sanctions are the cause of deprivation among the Cuban people. The U.S. maintains no restriction on humanitarian aid to Cuba. In fact, the United States is a major source of humanitarian assistance to the Cuban people and the largest provider of food to Cuba.

-- In 2008, the United States exported \$717.6 million in agricultural products, medical devices, medicine, wood, and humanitarian items to Cuba. In agricultural products alone, the United States sold \$700.1 million of goods to Cuba. Once again, in 2008, the United States was Cuba's fifth largest trading partner.

-- Madam Chair/Mr. Chairman,

-- It is equally important to note that the United States has demonstrated that we are prepared to engage the Government of Cuba on issues that affect the security and well-being of both our peoples. Specifically, we have resumed bilateral discussions on migration, we have initiated talks to re-establish direct mail service between the United States and Cuba, and we stand by to provide assistance should Cuba be ravaged again by hurricanes as it was in 2008. We believe that any resolution commenting on the relationship between Cuba and the United States of America should reflect the current tenor of these constructive exchanges between our two countries. Sadly, the resolution under discussion fails in that regard.

-- As we have sought to advance toward a new era in relations with Cuba and reached out to the Cuban people, we have called upon the Cuban government to take steps to respond to the desire of its citizens to enjoy political, social, and economic freedom. There are many things the Government of Cuba could do to signal its willingness to engage constructively with its own people and with the United States. Positive measures could include liberating the hundreds of prisoners of conscience in Cuban jails, ratifying the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), reducing the excessive charges on remittances flowing into the country, demonstrating greater respect for freedom of speech, ending the practice of arresting political opponents on vague and arbitrary charges such as "social dangerousness," and permitting the visit of UN rapporteurs on human rights and torture.

-- As other delegations consider this resolution, we hope that they will not be distracted from the fact that the Cuban government's airtight restrictions on internationally-recognized social, political, and economic freedoms are the true source of deprivation and obstacle to development in Cuba.

-- Mr. Chairman/Madam Chair,

-- My delegation will vote against this resolution. The United States will continue to work to expand opportunities for the people in Cuba to empower themselves through access to information and resources. We will also continue to engage the Government of Cuba on issues of mutual concern and national security. We feel it is high time for this body to recognize the situation in Cuba for what it is and to abandon

the rhetorical posturing of the past.

-- Thank you, Madam Chair/Mr. Chairman.

CLINTON